

Appendix A

Public Involvement Summary

The I-84 Viaduct Study has been conducted with input from the City of Hartford, community organizations, major area employers, Connecticut Department of Transportation officials, residents, and stakeholders. The rigorous public outreach effort included a series of public informational meetings/workshops, newsletters, mailings, press releases, and stakeholder interviews/meetings to share information with and receive comments and suggestions from the community. This summary describes the public involvement process, reporting on activities and comments received.

HUB of Hartford Steering Committee

The HUB of Hartford is comprised of representatives from neighborhoods; businesses; local organizations; and city, regional, and state agencies. As the project steering committee, the HUB provided guidance throughout the study on the development and refinement of alternatives as well as the evaluation criteria. The HUB met at key milestones to review and provide input on proposed concepts and findings.

The following table identifies HUB Committee members:

HUB of Hartford Steering Committee Members

NAME	AGENCY/REPRESENTING
Bob Painter	HUB Chair
Joseph Barber	Frog Hollow NRZ, Hartford 2000 Co-Chair
Bob Benzinger	The Hartford
Kevin Burnham	Director of Public Works, City of Hartford
Jennifer Carrier	Capitol Region Council of Governments
Julio Concepcion	Metro Hartford Alliance
Toni Gold	West End Civic Association
David Head	ConnDOT
Hans Keck	Hartford Courant
Mike Marshall	Aetna
Tom Maziarz	ConnDOT
Mark McGovern	Director of Economic Development, City of Hartford
Jackie McKinney	Asylum Hill Problem Solving Revitalization Association, ArtSpace Residents' Association
Tomas Nenortas	Hartford Preservation Alliance, South Downtown NRZ
Roger O'Brien	Director of Planning, City of Hartford
David Panagore	Chief Operating Officer and Director of Development Services, City of Hartford
Sandra Sheehan	Greater Hartford Transit District
Michael Zaleski	Hartford Business Improvement District

The HUB Committee meeting dates are listed below. Specific meeting minutes are on record at CRCOG's offices.

- August 12, 2009
- October 28, 2009
- December 14, 2009
- January 27, 2010
- April 22, 2010
- September 1, 2010
- September 30, 2010

Public Workshops/Meetings

A total of (3) public workshops/meetings were held throughout the study process, taking place at the close of each of the three study phases. Workshops were held in Phase I and Phase II of the study prompting attendees to provide comments and ideas for study alternatives and refinements. The third project phase concluded with a Community Summit, providing information on the final set of alternatives and a discussion on future opportunities. Open House sessions were held prior to each of these workshops/meetings to allow attendees to review information boards and speak with Project Team and HUB members one-on-one.

The first workshop, held on November 19, 2009, welcomed over (50) people from the Greater Hartford area. This workshop provided a forum for community members to discuss issues and opportunities related to the Viaduct and its role in the city and region. After the Open House, a short presentation

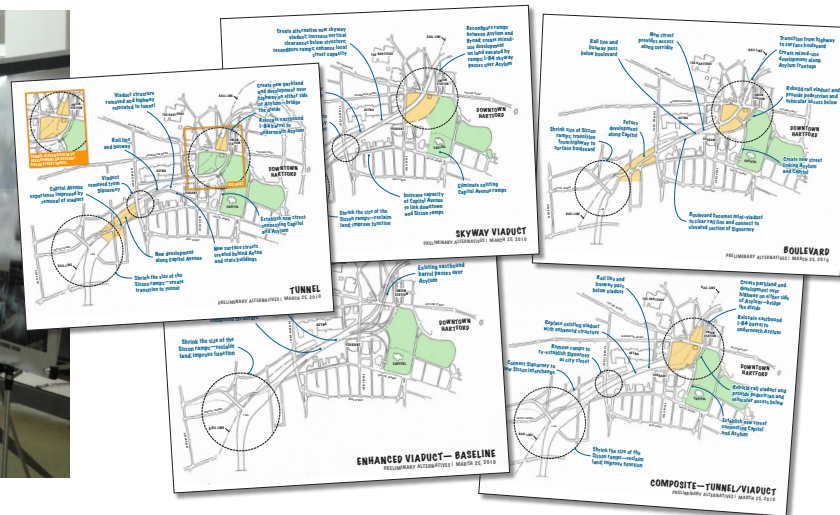


acquainted attendees with goals of the study, current conditions and relevant case studies. Attendees were then invited to join small break out groups focusing on urban design, economic development, and transportation specific issues. The program closed with a large group discussion on potential alternatives for the I-84 Viaduct. Key themes that emerged from this workshop include:

- Acknowledgement of Hartford's rich history, great neighborhoods, strong downtown employment base, and cultural resources
- The I-84 Viaduct today is a barrier, both physically and psychologically
- The extensive ramp network at either end of the Viaduct are large, unpleasant, and unnecessary
- Improvements to the east-west street grid are needed
- Union Station and the Trident area are important opportunities for new development

alternatives, and an initial assessment of the alternatives was given. Attendees were then divided into small groups for a facilitated discussion on what works well, what doesn't work, and improvements that can be made to each of the Preliminary Alternatives. Representatives from each group reported back with a summary of the small group discussions for all attendees. Key comments from this workshop include:

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- **Boulevard** – Some attendees were enthusiastic about creating a more walkable, tree-lined environment but others were not convinced that this was achievable given the circumstances and constraints. Several attendees expressed concern over the ability for a boulevard to accommodate high traffic volumes and felt that a high traffic boulevard may still be a barrier within the city.
- **Tunnel** – Very positive; attendees felt this alternative offered the most benefits by reconnecting the city and accommodating high traffic volumes. Many attendees questioned the viability of this option given the very high cost.
- **Composite Tunnel/Viaduct** – Very positive response; ability to reconnect the City in the Asylum/Broad area; key benefits offered of the full tunnel alternative at a much lower cost.
- *Do the cost estimates include the rail shift and new annex for Union Station?* It was assumed that these costs would be included in the rail project.
- *Is there a possibility of continuing the plans for a beltway system?* The HUB did not feel the continuation of I-291 was a feasible option due to right-of-way impacts and the law suits that originally dismissed this plan.
- *Will relocating the rail line affect the freight line?* The Griffin Line would not be affected; the shift actually brings the rail line back to its original elevation. The potential double track will benefit freight rail.
- *What are the right-of-way impacts of these alternatives?* Since this was a very high level planning study, these details have not been closely reviewed. However the alternatives are largely in the existing public right-of-way. The ramp structures in place today are more extensive than necessary; these alternatives illustrate how this land might be reclaimed.
- *Do these alternatives impact the New Britain Busway plans?* Due to the scale, complexity, and potential of the Viaduct replacement project, we did not want the Busway to restrict this study. Some of these alternatives may affect a very small portion of the current design, but construction plans may be issued in sections allowing for small portions to be redesigned as needed. It should be noted that the long term relocation of the rail viaduct has the potential to improve the Busway design. Additionally, any Viaduct reconstruction will need traffic management; the Busway can help mitigate the traffic impacts of this major construction.

On October 27, 2010 over (100) attendees gathered for the Community Summit. This public meeting concluded the study with a presentation of the alternatives developed with input from residents, major employers, local organizations, the City of Hartford, ConnDOT, and other stakeholders. Representatives from the City of Hartford, ConnDOT, CRCOG, and the HUB of Hartford Committee expressed their satisfaction with the study process and findings and a desire to keep this positive momentum moving forward. Overall the public attendees seemed pleased with the final recommendations and expressed particular interest in the Surface and Tunnel Alternatives. Key questions raised by the public include:

- *How long will this rebuild last?* Most bridge structures are designed for a 50 year lifespan. At grade alternatives however last for much longer.

More information on the Public Workshops and the Community Summit are available at the CROCOG Offices.

Stakeholder Meetings

Early in the study, the Project Team outreached to several key project stakeholders in order to gain insights on understanding the Viaduct and its impacts, available opportunities, and constraints that should be considered. Interviewees included area residents as well as members/representatives from the City of Hartford, ConnDOT, Federal Highway Administration, Connecticut DEP, Capitol Region Council of Governments, Hartford Preservation Alliance, Metro Hartford Alliance, The Hartford, Hartford Courant, ArtSpace Residents' Association, Aetna, Union Station/Greater Hartford Transit District, Hartford Business Improvement District, Park River Watershed, and local neighborhood revitalization zone organizations. A summary of key findings from these interviews is listed below. More information on these interviews is available at the CROCOG Offices.

- The highway is intensively used, plays a critical role in the city and region, and is in very poor condition
- The highway divides the city's downtown from its neighborhoods, weakening its core, and creates a very hostile environment

- Creative solutions are needed that address community/urban design, economic development, and transportation needs – there is the potential to reinvent the city's core and reconnect its street grid.
- All stakeholders are seeking viable solutions that can get implemented and understand that this is a challenging task.

Throughout the study technical meetings were held with the City of Hartford coordinate efforts with One City, One Plan and other related projects and planning activities.

The Project Team also held coordination meetings with ConnDOT. These meetings became critical during the review of the potential lateral rail shift to ensure synergy with the high speed intercity passenger rail proposal.

Additional Community Input

Throughout the study the community outreach efforts generated significant contributions from the public. Below is a summary of these comments. The Project Team reviewed these submissions and considered these ideas while developing the study alternatives. More information is available at the CROCOG Offices.

- **Jason Billings**, UConn Graduate Research Assistant, submitted case study information on "The Access and Mobility Impact of Freeway Removal". These materials covered (10) freeway removal projects in the United States and abroad and were included in a poster presentation at

the 2010 Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting.

- **Bill Mocarsky**, Hartford resident, offered several suggestions and sketches throughout the study. These ideas focused on alternatives for highway form, local road network improvements, and re-envisioning the City.
- **Aimee Chambers-McKay**, University of Hartford graduate student, submitted a thesis paper on “The Negative Effects of Interstate 84’s Construction on the Viability of Hartford’s Neighborhoods”. The paper discusses economic and social impacts of the I-84 Viaduct.
- **Mark Deming**, Hartford employee/commuter, described a tunnel concept that changes the alignment of I-84 to tie into the Charter Oak Bridge.

Other Outreach Initiatives:

- All project information was available on the CROG website including meeting announcements, meeting minutes, newsletters, presentations, reports, and base maps.
- Newsletters were distributed at key milestones throughout the study. A total of three newsletters were issued.
- Postcard mailings notified residents of upcoming Public Workshops and the Community Summit. These notifications included contacts for further information on the study.
- Public meeting announcements were posted in the *Hartford Courant* and the *Hartford News*.
- Multiple articles were published in the *Hartford Courant*, *Hartford Advocate* and *Urban Compass* blog in addition to television news coverage of the public meetings.

- Hartford Public Access Television recorded the second Public Workshop and the Community Summit. These tapings appeared on television and were also available online.
- Registered interested parties received email notifications of the newsletters and public meetings.
- Press releases were issued in coordination with the City of Hartford at key milestones.
- Comment sheets were available at all Open House sessions to solicit comments and ideas.
- A presentation to the Hartford City Council was made on November 8, 2010; the Council endorsed the study findings on December 13, 2010.

INTERSTATE 84 VIADUCT STUDY

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

The HUB of Hartford Committee invites you to discuss issues and opportunities related to the I-84 Viaduct and its role in the city and region.

Thursday, Nov. 19th
 Open House: 3 – 5:30pm
 Workshop: 7 – 9pm

Lyceum Resource Center
 227 Lawrence St. in Hartford

The goal of the I-84 Viaduct Study is to identify an array of preliminary alternatives to the current I-84 Viaduct and its future role in the city and region.

For more information on the study, please visit: www.crogonline.org

NOTE TO PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:
 We do not discriminate on the basis of disability. Individuals with disabilities are invited to make their needs known by contacting us by mail, phone, fax or email as soon as possible.
 Un traductor estará disponible para esta reunión si usted lo solicita al 860-822-2217. En masa pronto posible.
 Ph: 860-822-2217 | F: 860-724-1274 | kstewartson@crogonline.org | CROG

INTERSTATE 84 VIADUCT STUDY

The HUB of Hartford Committee invites you to discuss a series of conceptual alternatives to the current I-84 Viaduct and its future role in the city and region.

Thursday, March 25, 2010
 Open House 4:00 to 5:30 pm
 Workshop 5:30 to 8:30 pm

Event hosted by:
Hartford Public Library
 500 Main Street
 Hartford, CT

For more information on the study, please visit:
www.crogonline.org/viaduct.html

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- A presentation to the Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission was made on October 26, 2010; the Commission endorsed the study findings on November 16, 2010.
- A presentation to CRCOG's Transportation Committee was made on September 20, 2010; the Committee endorsed the study findings on December 13, 2010.
- A presentation to CRCOG's Policy Board was made on November 17, 2010; the Policy Board endorsed the study findings on December 15, 2010.